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WORKING PAPER 22

CLOSING THE GAP: DISARMAMENT AND DEVELOPMENT, THE INTERNATIONAL DEBATE

by Steve Lee

March 1990

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PREFACE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the United Nations some nations have argued that the two central problems facing humanity, armament and underdevelopment, should be addressed together. Some claim that disarmament, especially disarmament by the large military powers, would facilitate economic and social development. Money freed by disarmament could be transferred to development needs. There has been support for the establishment of a United Nations fund that would be the depository for disarmament savings and the source for new development assistance. It is also argued that development progress would reduce international disparities, tensions and local instability and would thus facilitate disarmament.

Throughout the 1980s the United Nations studied this potential approach to solving the world's most serious problems. Some nations advocated this approach, demanding quick disarmament measures and the creation of a fund to transfer disarmament savings to the poorest nations. Other nations dismissed it as naive, unrealistic and dangerous.

This attempt to link disarmament to development as a remedy for the troubles of our changing world deserves attention for two reasons. First, the political failure of the international community to recognize such a link is an important conclusion for those seeking solutions to humanity's great problems to heed. Second, this political failure offers an important example of how the United Nations continues to be frustrated in its important tasks of preventing war and promoting global well-being.

This paper reviews the origins of disarmament-development advocacy, examines some of the efforts to establish a link, including UN studies, and reviews the debate at the 1987 International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development (ICRDD). This look at the 1987 UN Conference reveals the various national points of view about this relationship, and provides a window on the larger international tensions that are at the root of much of international relations today. The examination ends with a look at Canada's position in the debate.

CONDENSÉ

Aux Nations-Unies, certains pays ont fait valoir qu'il faudrait aborder conjointement les deux principaux problèmes auxquels l'humanité fait face, à savoir les armements et le sous-développement. D'aucuns soutiennent que le désarmement, surtout en ce qui concerne les grandes puissances militaires, favoriserait le développement socio-économique. L'argent ainsi récupéré pourrait servir à faire progresser le développement. On a entretenu l'idée d'un fonds des Nations-Unies où seraient rassemblées les sommes épargnées grâce au désarmement et qui constituerait une nouvelle source d'aide au développement. On a en outre soutenu que le développement réduirait les disparités internationales, les tensions et l'instabilité locale, ce qui encouragerait le désarmement.

Pendant toutes les années 1980, l'ONU a étudié cette solution possible aux problèmes les plus graves du monde. Certains pays s'en sont faits les champions et ont exigé l'application rapide de mesures de désarmement et la création d'un fonds destiné à faciliter le transfert aux pays les plus pauvres des économies que le monde réaliserait grâce au désarmement. D'autres pays ont écarté cette option, soutenant qu'elle était naïve, peu réaliste et dangereuse.

Cet effort déployé pour établir un lien entre désarmement et développement et remédier de cette façon aux difficultés de notre monde en évolution mérite que l'on s'y arrête, et ce, pour deux raisons. Tout d'abord, les dirigeants politiques de la collectivité internationale n'ont pas su reconnaître l'existence d'un tel lien, et c'est là une conclusion importante dont ceux qui cherchent à résoudre les grands problèmes du monde auront avantage à tenir compte. En deuxième lieu, cet échec politique atteste que les Nations-Unies continuent à essuyer des revers dans leur importante tâche qui consiste à prévenir la guerre et à promouvoir le bien-être de l'humanité.

Le présent document examine les origines de la thèse établissant un lien entre le désarmement et le développement, il analyse certains des efforts déployés pour prouver l'existance de ce lien (y compris les études de l'ONU), et il passe en revue les délibérations de la Conférence internationale de 1987 sur les rapports entre le désarmement et le développement. Dans ce dernier contexte, l'ouvrage révèle divers points de vue nationaux sur les rapports susmentionnés et il donne une idée des tensions internationales plus vastes qui sont sous-jacentes à une bonne partie des relations internationales actuelles. Le document se termine avec un aperçu de la position du Canada dans le debat.

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INTRODUCTION

Recent dramatic changes in world affairs have not altered the fact that one hundred and sixty armed nations still nervously regard their neighbours as potential adversaries. Some are capable of incinerating the planet in a quarter of an hour. Many others can provoke unimaginable conflagration over days, months and years. A much more populated world, already burdened with millions of economic and environmental refugees, is on the brink of economic disruption and widespread starvation. One of the few sustained attempts to address these troubles has been the United Nations based efforts to link the dangers and increasing cost of armament with the obvious and growing need for food, clean water, health care and jobs in the poorest nations.

At the United Nations some nations have argued that the two central problems facing humanity, armament and underdevelopment, should be addressed together. Some claim that disarmament, especially disarmament by the large military powers, would facilitate economic and social development. Money freed by disarmament could be transferred to development needs. There has been support for the establishment of a United Nations fund that would be the depository for disarmament savings and the source for new development assistance. It is also argued that development progress would reduce international disparities, tensions and local instability and would thus facilitate disarmament.

Throughout the 1980s the United Nations studied this potential approach to solving the world's most serious problems. Some nations advocated this approach, demanding quick disarmament measures and the creation of a fund to transfer disarmament savings to the poorest nations. Other nations dismissed it as naive, unrealistic and dangerous.

This attempt to link disarmament to development as a remedy for the troubles of our changing world deserves attention for two reasons. First, the political failure of the international community to recognize such a link is an important conclusion for those seeking solutions to humanity's great problems to heed. Second, this political failure offers an important example of how the United Nations continues to be frustrated in its important tasks of preventing war and promoting global well-being.

This paper reviews the origins of disarmament-development advocacy, examines some of the efforts to establish a link, including UN studies, and reviews the debate at the 1987 International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development (ICRDD). This look at the 1987 UN Conference reveals the various national points of view about this relationship, and provides a window on the larger international tensions that are at the root of much of international relations today. The examination ends with a look at Canada's position in the debate.

FROM BAD TO WORSE

It is useful to begin by taking brief note of the world's economic problems and levels of arms spending. The World Bank gives a clear picture of the past decade.

> Since 1980 matters have turned from bad to worse: economic growth rates have slowed, real wages have dropped, and growth in employment has faltered in most developing countries. Precipitous declines in commodity prices have cut rural incomes, and governments have reduced their real spending on social services.[1]

Pointing to deteriorating economic conditions and mounting debt difficulties the United Nations says the world economy is in "uncharted waters."

> The present situation once again raises serious concern about the ability of the existing international economic system to cope with these strains. Political tensions have risen....These challenges pose serious risks.[2]

Policy-makers in Southern nations go further. They draw a direct link between deepening poverty and local, regional and international conflict. The Mexico City-based Director of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbeans, Gabriel Siri, told the CIIPS-sponsored Roundtable on Negotiations for Peace in Central America in May 1988:

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[1] World Development Report 1988, World Bank, p.4.

[2] World Economic Survey, United Nations 1988, Ch. 1, p.1.

> During the past decade, the deep and prolonged recession has made the situation of the poor even more desperate. The presence of this large body of indigent people is at the root of the current social and political upheaval that the countries are experiencing and constitutes the main obstacle to a sustainable peace.[3]

Former Nigerian Foreign Minister, Ibrahim Gambari, told a CIIPS-sponsored conference on war risk reduction in October 1988 that economic and infrastructure collapse now threaten the very existence of some states. The collapse of social structures and political authority, he said, will pose increasing threats to international peace and security.[4]

The orthodox response of rich nations to poverty and underdevelopment has been development assistance. Yet, as global economic conditions deteriorated through the 1980s total international aid to poor countries remained at the same level. In 1987 assistance was actually less than in 1980.[5] The ten leading recipients of global economic assistance are: Egypt, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Israel, India, Syria, China, Pakistan, Cuba and Jordan.[6]

Four nations contribute more than half of all the world's development assistance. They are: the United States, which contributes 23 percent, Japan 12 percent,[7] France 10 percent and Saudi Arabia 8 percent. The total amount of this economic assistance to poorer countries is about $US 40 billion. Canada contributes about 4.5 percent of the total. Only six other nations contribute more than 1 percent of the total: West Germany 7 percent, USSR 7 percent, UK 3 percent, Kuwait, Netherlands and Italy all contribute

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[3] Roundtable, Ottawa, 19 May 1988, paper presented by Gabriel Siri: External Cooperation Plans for the Rehabilitation of Central America.

[4] Kingston, 7-8 October 1988 with permission.

[5] North-South News, Spring 1989, No. 8 (Source: IMF/World Bank Development Committee, 1988).

[6] World Military and Social Expenditures 1987-88, Ruth Leger Sivard, Washington D.C.: World Priorities, 1987, Table II, pp.43-45.

[7] In 1989 it is possible that Japan will become, for the first time, the largest donor of foreign aid. The national budget presented on 24 January 1989 proposed a major increase in foreign aid to $13 billion. Japanese defence spending will also be increased to $39 billion. With increases to both aid and military spending Japan will maintain its 1 to 3 spending ratio.

around 2 percent. Other significant contributors are Australia, Sweden and Norway. All the nations of Eastern Europe, excluding the USSR, together contribute less than Norway.[8]

The contributing nations do not necessarily contribute on a most-able-to-pay basis. Norway contributes most, 1.2 percent of its Gross National Product. West Germany, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands and France all spend between one-half and one percent of their GNP on development assistance. Canada, Australia and Belgium contribute about 0.4 percent of their GNP, Great Britain 0.3 percent, Japan 0.28 percent, the United States 0.23 percent and the USSR 0.13 percent. As a percentage of GNP, Canada makes half the contribution of the West Germans, Dutch and Scandinavians. The Americans contribute half as much as Canadians, and the Soviets half as much as the Americans.

Canada's contribution to development assistance rose steadily from less than 0.1 percent of GNP in the early 1950s to more than 0.5 percent in 1976. Since then, as a percent of GNP, Canada's contribution to development has continued to fall.[9] In the 1989-90 budget there was a $1.8 billion cut to development assistance over five years, starting with a $335 million cut in 1989-90. For the coming year the portion of Canada's GNP going to development assistance will be 0.43 percent.[10]

As the 1980s draw to a close there has been no effective response to the "bad-to-worse" economic decline, deepening poverty, debt difficulties and the mounting possibility of societal collapse in some of the poorest nations. Meanwhile, according to the United Nations, military spending has increased world-wide during the decade.

> ...between 1960 and 1980, world-wide military expenditures about doubled, in real terms. After decelerating in the 1970s real expenditures increased sharply in the period after 1980. The result has been that whereas military expenditures as a percentage of world gross national product declined from 1960 through 1980, they have increased from 1980 on. It has been estimated that in excess of $800 billion was spent on armaments and military personnel world-

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[8] World Military and Social Expenditures 1987-88, Sivard, Table II, pp.43-45 and World Development Report 1988, The World Bank, Table 21, p.262.

[9] The Canadian World Almanac, 1988, Global Press, Toronto, p.102.

[10] North-South News, Spring 1989, No. 8.

wide in 1985. Developed countries largely account for the rise in military expenditure in recent years.[11]

Not only the developed nations have been arming. Two of the poorest nations, India and Pakistan, each spent more than 40 percent of their national budgets on the military. India has doubled its spending in 10 years to $11.6 billion. Pakistan, too, has doubled its military spending in 10 years to more than $3 million. India's navy includes a nuclear submarine, 10 other submarines, 2 aircraft carriers, 4 destroyers and 21 frigates. Its army has 3,000 tanks. There are 730 planes in its airforce.[12]

Two nations account for more than half of the world's military spending. Not surprisingly they are the Soviet Union (31 percent) and the United States (28 percent). With their military allies they count for nearly 80 percent of world military spending (NATO 40.8 percent, Warsaw Pact 36.5 percent).[13] Military spending in the rest of the world is dominated by the Middle East which accounts for nearly half of all military spending outside Europe and the Superpower alliances.

China accounts for 3 percent of the world's military spending total and the other continents and regions account for less than 2 percent each. However, many nations, both developed and developing; rich and poor, spend whatever they can on armament. The developed world spends 5.6 percent of its collective GNP on the military. The developing world spends exactly the same.[14]

In the past decade, while there were great fluctuations from year to year and from region to region, military spending increased in both the developed and developing nations. The rate of increase in military spending in developing countries, on average between 1974-84 was higher, at 3.5 percent than in the developed nations -- 2.8 percent.

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[11] UN General Assembly A/Conf. 130/PC/INF/7, 27 February 1986, Examination of...Military Expenditures..(and) Remedial Measures, p.6.

[12] The Ottawa Citizen, 3 September 1988, Ben Tierney from Islamabad, "Time Bomb Ticking Away in South Asia Is Nuclear," p.7.

[13] World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfer 1987, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1988, Figure 3, p.2.

[14] Sivard, Table II, p.43.

In the most recent years this rate of increase has slowed. That slow-down, however, is likely due to the completion of major arms sales, economic constraints and debt rather than any conscious desire to reduce armament.[15]

The United States and Soviet Union far out-distance the next group of nations in military spending. At more than $US 200 billion each, the Superpowers spend ten times as much as any of the other major military spenders. The UK, China, West Germany, Saudi Arabia and France all spend in the $US 20 billion range. Iraq, Poland and Japan round out the top ten.[16]

Just as development assistance spending reflects decisions based on criteria other than most-able-to pay, so too does military spending. Many nations financially least able to support major military expenditures are, in fact, doing so. The top ten military spenders as a portion of GNP are Qatar, Iraq, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Syria, North Korea, Libya Yemen (Aden), Jordan and Nicaragua. (Egypt and Israel are 11th and 12th, Canada is 95th.)[17] Perhaps even more revealing is the ranking of nations according to military spending as a portion of government spending. These figures reveal the political spending choices that are made: guns versus butter. The ten governments that spend the greatest share of their resources on armament are Afghanistan, Yugoslavia, Qatar, Iraq, Taiwan, Soviet Union, North Korea, Vietnam, Oman, and Syria. The runner-up group is especially interesting: United Arab Emirates, Libya, Peru, Cambodia, China, Chad, Jordan, Iran and El Salvador. (Canada is 90th).[18]

With the exception of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, the leading military spenders, as measured by the portion of government expenditure that goes to armament, are all developing nations in Asia, Africa and Latin America, including some of the

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[15] World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers 1987, ACDA. See also Ruth Leger Sivard as quoted by Globe and Mail, 25 January 1988, "Arms Outlay Decreasing" economic problems and "The strain of the world economy" have created debt and some decrease in spending by some nations.

[16] Ibid., Tables pp.30-38.

[17] Ibid..

[18] Ibid.. See also The Military Balance 1988-89, International Institute for Strategic Studies, London 1988, p.122, for GNP, per capita, rate of growth and other comparative military spending figures.

poorest. Some of these same nations -- Egypt, Vietnam, Syria, China, Jordan -- are among the leading recipients of world economic assistance. Peru is by far the major recipient of Canadian development assistance in Latin America. Canada also gives economic assistance to El Salvador, China and Chad.

A nation's development needs and its government's perceived need to spend on armament are clearly separate and distinct. For rich nations, ability to contribute to international development assistance and willingness to do so are also separate. So too is a rich nation's willingness to spend on armament and international development. The Soviet Union spends a great deal on the first and little on the second, about a 10 to 1 ratio. Norway spends only twice as much on its military as it does on development assistance, about a 2 to 1 ratio. Japan spends relatively little on either, 1 percent of its GNP on the military and 0.3 percent on development assistance. France, the world's sixth largest military spender in real dollar terms is also the third largest spender on development assistance in real dollar terms, and the fifth largest in percent of GNP terms. Governments of both rich and poor nations continue to see development needs and development assistance, on the one hand, and military needs and military spending, on the other, as separate and unrelated spending choices.

SWORDS TO PLOUGHSHARES

If military spending and development are separate political and public policy choices, is it possible to suggest a relationship between the two? Is it realistic or useful to presuppose that spending decisions in one would affect the other; that disarmament and development would be mutually supportive?

Many believe there is such a relationship. Spending on armament while much of the world starves is seen as morally, politically and economically unsound and unjustifiable. Neatly combining the moral, political and economic arguments by using the term "theft," United States President Dwight D. Eisenhower, in an often quoted speech, said in 1959:

> Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies, in a final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, from those who are cold and are not clothed.[19]

More than twenty years later, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau told the House of Commons "an arms race while millions die of hunger as is a veritable scandal."[20]

Perhaps the oldest and one of the most often quoted references to the idea of a relationship between disarmament and economic well-being is found in the Old Testament. It is a reference that suggests that disarmament could be pursued not only in its own right but in order to facilitate development.

> ...and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.[21]

These inspiring, and many would hope prophetic, words are carved into the smooth stone face of the wall on 1st Avenue in New York, directly across from the United Nations General Assembly building. They have, perhaps, helped inspire the United Nations to take up the disarmament-development debate. Yet, upon closer examination this biblical reference reveals some of the very controversies and contradictions that are found in that debate and in trying to establish a relationship between armament and under-development.

"They", in the swords and ploughshares quote, is of central importance. Who disarms? When? Under what conditions? A fuller reading of the text from Isaiah suggests that it is only some who shall convert their weapons into agricultural instruments. Others, God's chosen people, shall continue to raise up swords and smite their enemies. The text of Isaiah and its references to Zachariah reveal a different picture of swords and ploughshares: disarmament and development.

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[19] Disarmament and World Development, p.13. For a more complete text of Eisenhower's speech and commentary see Securing Our Future, pp.116-124.

[20] House of Commons Debates, 15 June 1981.

[21] Isaiah, Chapter 2:4, Holy Bible, King James Version.

In the last days, in the days of the destruction of the Philistines, many people shall go to the mountains to be taught the ways of God "and He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they [emphasis added] shall beat their swords into ploughshares..."[22] While those rebuked and out of favour shall be disarmed, God shall not disarm those in favour. On the contrary, in those last days "when I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made them as a sword of a mighty man ...and they shall be as mighty men, which tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets of battle: and they shall fight, because the Lord is with them and the riders on horses shall be confounded."[23]

It is worth reflecting on this larger message. It reveals not only the questions about who disarms and when, but also suggests the other questions that enter into the relationship between disarmament and development. Are military spending and armament legitimate? What should they be used for? What provides security: disarmament or military strength? Who can judge these issues, and how? In the absence of some clear message, and a clear choice among peoples and nations by God, the United Nations has provided a forum for the discussion and debate about these and other disarmament-development questions. The United Nations has also tried to answer some of these questions through its own studies and efforts.

UN interest in establishing a relationship between military spending and underdevelopment goes back at least to the 1950s when Prime Minister Edgar Faure of France proposed the creation of a Fund that would transfer money from disarmament of the major military powers to development in the poorer countries. Some have argued that the UN Charter refers to the relationship between armament and underdevelopment.

Article 26 of the United Nations Charter calls for the "least diversion of resources to arms" and refers to the economic and social needs of humanity. It should be noted, however, that division of opinion is so strong on the existence and nature of any link between armament and underdevelopment that in 1987 Britain and other Western European

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22 Ibid..

23 Zachariah, Chapter 9:13 and Chapter 10:5 Holy Bible, King James Version.

states complained about "improper"[24] references to the UN Charter in trying to promote such a relationship.

The most significant efforts to show a relationship between disarmament and development have been in the past decade. In 1978 the United Nations General Assembly's Special Session on Disarmament Assembly drew attention to a competitive relationship between armament and development, declared that the globe could not sustain both, and appointed a group of experts to study the various forms of relationship that "might exist between disarmament and development; that is, between balanced measures to reduce military expenditure and improve the way of life of all peoples, particularly in the least developed countries."[25]

Under the leadership of Sweden's Inga Thorsson, and after three years of work by a hundred researchers in twenty countries, forty special reports and the most extensive program of disarmament research undertaken through the United Nations, the group reported to the Secretary General in October 1981. The report emphasized the competitive relationship between arms spending and development needs. It made a strong guns-or-butter case. "The world has a choice. It can continue to pursue the arms race, with its characteristic vigour, or it can move with deliberate speed towards a more sustainable international economic and political order. It cannot do both."[26] The Thorsson Report's recommendations emphasized the need to measure and limit military spending, reallocate military resources to development of the poorest countries, and plan for conversion of military industries to civilian purposes.

> The main conclusion of this report is that an effective relationship between disarmament and development can and must be established. Concrete measures within a framework of <u>disarmament for development</u> could have a positive effect, politically, psychologically and economically. They could improve

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[24] UN International Conference on the Relationship Between Disarmament and Development, A/Conference 130/28, 11 September 1987. Letter from the head of delegation of the UK to the Secretary-General of the Conference, p.2.

[25] Resolution 33/71 I, 14 December 1978 was adopted without a vote.

[26] <u>The Relationship between Disarmament and Development</u> A/36/356 5 October 1981.

relations between developed and developing countries, and so enhance prospects for world peace and security.[27]

The recommendations of the study group were to set the course of much of the work and terms of reference for the United Nations on this issue in the following decade. They can be summarized as follows:

- the major military powers especially, and others, should prepare and publicize assessments of the social costs of their military spending;

- all governments should study "the benefits" of reallocation of military spending to a new international economic order that would close the income gap between North and South;

- there should be greater transparency in military spending and transfers;

- preparations should be made for conversion of resources from military to civilian purposes "especially to meet urgent economic and social needs, in particular, in the developing countries", and that any studies and plans be made available to the UN;

- the UN should incorporate the disarmament-development approach into UN work, and should increase its public education efforts on the "social and economic consequences of the arms race.

The group also suggested that the UN consider establishing an international disarmament fund for development.

The Study Group was not the only advocate of a disarmament fund for development. The year the group was established, France once again called for the creation of a fund which would be the depository of disarmament "savings" to be disbursed to meet the needs of developing countries. This time France proposed that the Permanent Members of the Security Council contribute $US 1 billion seed money. France renewed the proposal in 1980 at the Sandefjord Conference on Disarmament and Development. Also in 1980, the

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[27] Clyde Sanger, Safe and Sound, Disarmament and Development in the Eighties, Ottawa: Deneau, 1982, p.105.

Brandt Commission called for a tax on military spending and arms transfers and the creation of a disarmament-development fund. France revived the proposal for a fund once again in 1983, even though by then the UN Study Group had concluded that the idea was "mainly political"[28] and too ambitious for its time.

Between 1946 and 1985 the General Assembly adopted a total of fifty-nine resolutions that attempted to link disarmament with development. Some of these resolutions advocated a fund for the transfer of resources with proposals from India (1950) and France and also from the Soviet Union (in 1956), Brazil (in 1964), Senegal and Romania (1978) and Tunisia (1984). Other resolutions advocated a tax on military budgets (USSR 1973), and reduced military spending with "dividend" benefits going to development (USSR 1956), Mexico (1978).

The fund, and other proposals to institutionalize and financially link a process of disarmament with the process of development, can be summarized as follows:

- Fund -- A fund would channel disarmament savings to development and thus link disarmament and development institutionally and financially. Increased development assistance could, however, become at least partially dependent upon progress in disarmament. The creation of a fund would also require the creation of a new international agency, perhaps under the UN, to collect, disburse and supervise disarmament-development transfers. The creation of such an agency seems unlikely. Its ability to function effectively seems remote given that most countries refuse to report armament information.

- Military Budget Reductions -- These proposals encourage reduced military spending and the transfer of savings to development. Those nations with the largest military budgets would make the largest real, and perhaps proportionate, cuts. However, there is a great lack of accurate and detailed public information on national military spending. Only about twenty countries, including Canada, report their military budgets to the United Nations. It would be impossible to calculate reductions, savings and transfers without full and accurate information from every nation.

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[28] Ibid.

That is unlikely in the foreseeable future. Some way to verify budget cuts, and an effective system of sanctions for those who cheat would also have to be devised.

It is also not clear what would be used as a measuring base: military spending as part of GNP, as part of government spending, per capita, or dollar amounts. Contributors and levels of contributions would vary enormously depending on the chosen base of measurement. These proposals also ignore regional and other unique military security issues. Should Nicaragua and Samoa be treated in the same way?

- Tax -- Some proposals suggest a tax on military spending and arms exports. The tax could be scaled to collect most from those nations with the largest armies or the largest arms export trade. However, just as there is no full knowledge about military budgets, there is no full knowledge about arms exports, and in some cases even the size of armies is not known. Arms exporters would likely add the cost of any tax to arms sale prices. Some nations, like France and Brazil, could claim that revenue earned from arms sales contributes to either international or their own development.

- Conversion -- It is believed by some that conversion of arms industries to civilian output would release resources for consumer goods and services and thus contribute to development. Little is known about the probable costs of such conversion, and it is unlikely so long as nations perceive some need for armament either through production or import. A growing number of nations are entering the arms production business. The prospects for conversion on any significant scale are remote.

In the course of the UN studies and debate some have argued that reduced arms spending could enable increased development efforts. Nobel Prize winning economist Vassily Leontief believes that, "in the military sector we have the greatest potential reserve for support for economic and social development." Others have argued that arms reduction savings should be "released" and directed to development.

The First Special Session of the General Assembly on Disarmament concluded that, "resources released as a result of disarmament measures should be devoted to the economic and social development of all nations and contribute to the bridging of the

economic gap between developed and developing countries." Still others have argued that resources must be transferred from military spending to development:

> It is this insane level of armaments itself which has become a major source of our insecurity...it would be better to eradicate non-military threats to security such as hunger, illiteracy and underdevelopment. Funds used to fight these scourges would deny resources to the merchants of death and destruction.[29]

But the issues involved are more numerous, more complex and more intractable than the simple prescription that less guns could, should or would mean more butter. The major currents of the debate are set out below.

THE GUNS-BUTTER ARGUMENTS

Like Eisenhower, Trudeau and many present leaders in the Third World, some argue that there is a clear and unqualified choice between guns and butter. Moral imperative, political expediency and economic limitations demand that the world choose fewer guns-- disarmament, and more butter -- development. This argument stresses the competitive relationship between the two. It reflects a belief that increasing armament and high levels of military spending cannot continue if there is to be social and economic development, especially in the least developed nations. National and international security can only be achieved through lower levels of armament and expanded development.

How are some of these choices made in practice:

- Guns and Butter -- In practice, Canada and the United States, most western European nations and some other nations that perceive external military threat argue that armament and development are two necessary and distinct activities. This argument reflects a view that arms spending and development assistance are two legitimate, separate national and international activities, that each has a rationale, that each can be pursued simultaneously, and that both military spending (including some kinds of armament) and stronger economies are necessary for national and thus international security.

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29 Statement by the Permanent Representative of Zimbabwe, 11 September 1987, A/Conf. 130/31, p.2.

- Guns for Butter -- The Soviet Union, the German Democratic Republic and some other Eastern European nations, while agreeing that there is a competitive relationship between arms spending and development needs, argue that disarmament must precede increased development assistance. Disarmament will create surplus resources that can be transferred to development. Disarmament first, then development. This allows theoretical support for development efforts but maintains a focus on the disarmament agenda, particularly the Soviet disarmament agenda. National and international security will be strengthened by disarmament first, development second.

- Only Guns -- Nations such as Iran, Iraq, El Salvador and Syria, involved in prolonged military conflict, have clearly adopted a guns before butter policy. As a result of enormous military expenditures these nations have deepened their underdevelopment, in some cases crippling or destroying their economies. They argue that military and political security demand that significant resources go to armament. Development of their own economies, or development assistance for others, will have to wait. Security depends on military spending, even leading, if necessary, into bankruptcy.

- Only Butter -- Sweden, Mexico, some other nations and NGOs argue that armament no longer provides security. An immediate end to arms spending and major development initiatives are needed. Any arms spending in the face of the underdevelopment crisis is morally wrong. Hunger and poverty are the real threats to national and international security. Only development assistance and development will provide true security.

One of the leading proponents of a relationship between disarmament and development has admitted how tenuous any relationship is. An advocate of institutionalizing that relationship, Swedish diplomat Inga Thorsson, who chaired the United Nations Expert Study Group on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, recognizes that a relationship still cannot easily be established.

> [M]any complex political, economic, social and human issues are to be found within the dynamic triangle of disarmament, development and security.... [T]here is as yet no full understanding of the interlinkages between the gigantic tasks constituting the three corners of that triangle, as well as between the military and non-military threats to security or peoples and

> nations creating interdependence not only between countries but also between issues.[30]

These complex issues include: perception and assessment of various kinds of threat, including military threat; acceptable spending, responses and contingencies in the face of such threats; the role of the military in government and national affairs; the effects of military spending on development; conversion of the arms industry to civilian purposes; almost every aspect of the global economy and the role of the United Nations in both disarmament and development.

There are conflicting views about these and other issues. Volumes of United Nations studies have failed to resolve these conflicts. The United Nations studies have failed to establish some universal truth that military spending prevents or inhibits development. Economists have not agreed that military spending has a negative impact on national economies. Some argue that there are high "opportunity costs," to military spending. Others claim positive spin-offs from military spending: technology transfer and innovation, contributions to an industrial base, scientific research and development, government created jobs and military careers. Other economists claim no positive or negative effect.

More work needs to be done according to British expert Mary Kaldor:

> It is clear that military activities are enormously important and some, such as war or the coup, can invalidate development strategies based on research which may have painstakingly examined the economy but neglected the armed forces....The military has been treated as a side issue, not central to the problem of development. This perspective needs to be changed; the military play an integral role in the process of economic and social change...."[31]

Even those opposed to high military spending and the militarization of society recognize these contradictions. Writing about the effect of military spending on women in Italy, Elisabetta Addis of the University of Abruzzi says:

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[30] Overview of events in the disarmament-development relationship, since 1985, Inga Thorsson, A/Conf. 130/PC/INF/9/Add.1, 3 April 1987 (para 3).

[31] Mary Kaldor, "The Military in Third World Development," Disarmament and World Development, Mac Graham et al., eds., New York: Pergamon, 1986, p.99.

> Military spending is part of public spending which belongs to both men and women. Women contribute to public finance as workers in paid employment and as workers in the household. Military spending redistributes this in favour of men and creates employment opportunities, income opportunities and economic power in favour of male citizens only. Women should therefore ask for a reform of the army, to allow the inclusion of women....[32]

Military spending and a strong national military establishment may contribute to either political and economic stability, or instability. Political stability may help development, or may hinder the economic growth and the political transformation of societies.

Decades of political stability in Franco's Spain, Brezhnev's Soviet Union, modern Burma, Romania, Tunisia and other nations probably hindered development. So has development been retarded during the instability of the Cultural Revolution in China, the conflicts in Ethiopia, and the recurring turbulence of the Indian sub-continent.

Does the military ensure the internal stability and security from external attack that allows development to take place? Is the military a relatively well educated "modernizing influence?" Does a large military facilitate greater economic assistance from rich, industrial military allies?

> ...it has proved possible to make some empirical generalities about the military in the Third World. In particular, there appears to be a strong association between high military spending, high rates of industrial growth, and foreign dependence.[33]

Or, on the contrary, is the military a consumer of national resources such as labour, science, and government revenues that would otherwise go to development or development assistance for others?

For every rule that can be proclaimed about the negative impact of the military on development there arise as many exceptions. Could Israel exist or feel secure enough to proceed with social and economic development without huge military expenditures? Is

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32 Women and the Military System, Eva Isaksson, ed., New York: Harvester-Wheatsheaf 1988, p.154.

33 Mary Kaldor in "The Military in Third World Development," Disarmament and World Development, p.98.

long-term development in the Front Line States without increased military spending or military help possible in the face of continuing attacks from South Africa? Can Nicaragua realistically demobilize its large army and cut its high military spending so long as it faces a superpower-financed military threat?

> One could not, for instance, expect either governments or guerrilla movements to put aside weapons if this left them defenceless before a hegemonic power or unable as is Southern Africa to use armed force or the threat of it to remove fundamental injustices. What kind of disarmament, for whom and in what international political and economic conjuncture are questions that cannot be shirked.[34]

THE UNITED NATIONS STUDIES

The International Conference on the Relationship Between Disarmament and Development (ICRDD) held in New York from 24 August to 11 September 1987 attempted to address these economic, armament and security questions. The attempt was part of the larger effort to establish and promote a cause-effect relationship between armament and underdevelopment, and disarmament and development.

In preparation for the conference the United Nations undertook three studies: a review of the relationship between disarmament and development; ways to release resources through disarmament for development; and the implications of military spending for the world economy and for developing countries. None of the studies established a cause-effect relationship between armament and underdevelopment.

The review of the relationship listed various development and unmet human needs, and called for the seeking of security through disarmament. "Disarmament and development remain parallel and distinct processes," the study concluded, "although there are many ways in which they can reinforce each other." Furthermore, "Development should not run the risk of becoming a casualty of the arms race, although disarmament by itself cannot directly bring about development."[35]

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[34] Robin Luckham, "Militarism and International Economic Dependence," Disarmament and Work Development, p.65.

[35] Review A/Conf. 130/PC/INF/6, 19 February 1986, p.17.

The study of the ways to release resources through disarmament for development reviewed various national proposals for taxes and funds. This study stated a desired goal of transferring resources from the arms race to development but it, too, was unable to conclude a cause-effect relationship:

> Developing countries are affected in several ways by the current levels and magnitude or world-wide military expenditures. On the one hand, they are affected to the extent that their economies are vulnerable to the negative impact of their own national military expenditure. On the other hand, they are affected through the impact of the arms race on the economic performance of the industrialized States, including the ability of the latter to provide adequate resources for the attainment of developmental goals in the developing countries. [36]

It is noteworthy that the UN study clearly pointed to national military spending in developing countries themselves as an impediment to development and called for national disarmament in both the North and the South as a possible means of releasing resources for development. This study, however, did not describe or explain the "negative impact" of military spending.

The third UN study attempted to do so. Called, Examination of the implications of the level and magnitude of the continuing military expenditures, in particular those of the nuclear weapon states and other military important states, for the world economy and the international economic and social situation, particularly for developing countries, and elaboration of appropriate recommendations for remedial measures, its conclusions are the most salient in understanding the failure to establish an economic link between armament and underdevelopment and the subsequent nature of the UN debate.

Military activities, said the study, consume "a significant share of the public finances of developed and developing countries," a number of important non-energy minerals (i.e., 11 percent of the world's copper production, 6 percent of global nickel consumption), 4 percent of the world's total labour force, (50 million people) and one quarter of global research and development spending and efforts.

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[36] Ways..., A/Conf. 130/PC/INF/8, 25 February 1986, p. 4-5.

The implications of this spending and resource use are difficult to evaluate, however. Although clearly a consumption and not an investment economic activity, nevertheless, "military spending, like all expenditure, generates incomes and outputs: it is part of the global national product." The study continued, "...for individual countries the impact of military spending may differ with the socio-economic system and its level of development."[37]

Some of the ways in which national and the world economy may be affected by military spending are the depressing of capital formation and productivity in the civilian sectors of the economy. In the capitalist industrial nations "military spending has high opportunity costs over the long run, in terms of investment, productivity and growth."[38] (Although military spending can create at least short-term jobs, the study points out).

In the communist industrial nations the impact of military spending is fundamentally different. Because there can be no unemployment and no underused industrial capacity (in theory at least) in such economies, military spending and production of arms must necessarily take labour, plant and production from other economic activities. "An absence of flexibility in using resources or a resort to imports or loans from abroad could make the immediate problems of internal adjustment as a consequence of an increased military effort correspondingly greater."

For developing countries military spending can have "a worsening effect on external debt, unfavourable trade balances and unmet socio-economic needs."[39] Nevertheless, according to this study, it is difficult to draw firm economic conclusions and to establish any universal armament-underdevelopment economic link.

> At a general level the extent to which the military expenditures of major military spenders, and other militarily significant states, affect the world economy depends largely upon the size and importance of their national economies and their role in international trade, foreign investment and finance. The degree of vulnerability of various economies to the economic performance

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37 Examination, A/Conf. 130/PC/INF/7, 27 February 1986, p.10.

38 Ibid.

39 Ibid.

> of major military spenders is also determined by the extent and nature of their integration into the world economy.[40]

British researcher Chris Smith has come to a similar finding:

> There is a certain well rehearsed logic in the suggestion that the process of underdevelopment is inextricably linked to the process of militarization and that, ergo, the reversal of the arms race...will be the harbinger of social, political and economic development. But neither the activist, the intellectual nor the enlightened policy maker in the Third World has ever totally accepted this argument except on one level....the opportunity cost argument.[41]

Military spending by the North and South, West and East is one economic factor in national economies and the global economy. Military spending can be a further aggravation to larger economic problems of "high interest rates, unstable currency exchange rates, heavy debt, falling commodity prices and fluctuating terms of trade."[42] Military spending, however, is not the cause of these economic problems. Furthermore, while there is an opportunity cost to military spending there is also a strongly perceived risk in reducing military spending. National governments, including Canada's, continue to see high and increasing levels of military spending as a necessary response to global and regional insecurity and threat.

In the end, armament-underdevelopment is not an economic issue but a moral one. The examination of the effect of military spending on the global economy concludes: "The contrast between global military expenditures and the unmet socio-economic needs provides a compelling MORAL APPEAL for relating disarmament to development."

THE POSITIONS OF GLADIATORS: THE UN DEBATE

Debate at the international conference on disarmament and development reflected the lack of agreement on the economic relationships between armament and underdevelopment, the importance of military spending, the nature and importance of national

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[40] Examination, A/Conf. 130/PC/INF/7, p.14.

[41] Chris Smith, "Disarmament: North-South Links," Disarmament and World Development, p.186.

[42] Examination, A/Conf. 130/PC/INF/7, p.14

security and the usefulness of linking disarmament progress with development needs. China maintained that disarmament would release funds for development. Its credibility in this belief is strengthened in light of its own recent dramatic cut of 25 percent in its military budget and its simultaneous program to reform and vitalize its economy.

In clear reference to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia, China claimed development would not be possible without a peace that included "an end to acts of armed aggression and occupation."[43] In a thinly disguised attack on the West, China called for improvements to the "irrationality of economic relations" which "hampers efforts to maintain peace and security."[44] Predictably, China also blamed the Soviet Union and the United States for the major problems confronting the conference because, China claimed, the arms race has largely been between the superpowers who led in nuclear and conventional weapons, arms exports, and military spending.

The Soviet Union wanted to remain friendly to the developing nations' call for greater transfer of resources but also wanted to remain uncommitted in any specific way to such transfers. Moscow maintained its long-standing position that disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, must precede new major development efforts. Predictably, the Soviet Union blamed the United States for lack of progress in disarmament. In spite of the otherwise low profile General Secretary Gorbachev did not miss the occasion to criticize US policy and action. "The obstacles the opponents of disarmament have placed on the road towards this conference have confirmed once again the interdependency of disarmament and development and the urgency of the task."[45]

In a play to post-colonial sentiments he referred to the developing countries as "exploited and dispossessed." The Soviet Union also denounced policies of military superiority, any arms race in space, apartheid, interference to prevent progressive change

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43 Working Paper submitted by the Chinese delegation A/Conf. 130/PC/C0, 21 April 1987. See also: Qian Qichen, "China's Position on the Relationship Between Disarmament and Development," International Strategic Studies, No. 4, October 1987.

44 Ibid.

45 Letter to the Secretary-General of the Conference: message from M. Gorbachev, 25 August 1987.

in other states (read Nicaragua), and embargoes on the transfer of technology (read Western technology to the Warsaw Pact nations). Moscow made some concrete suggestions for nuclear superpower disarmament, renewed its support for a disarmament for development fund, called for a world conference of economic security, the establishment of a UN debt and development research centre, and advocated more UN studies in conversion, conflict resolution and the impact of the military on the environment.

The United States refused to take part in the Conference. In the words of the US State Department, the United States did not take part because it did not recognize the "credibility of the arguments" that there was a relationship between disarmament and development. "They are not issues that should be considered interrelated."[46]

US refusal to take part was also believed to stem from an American concern that the conference would be used as an anti-Western forum, and in particular that the economic problems of the Third World would be blamed on heavy military spending by the West. There was also US concern that the conference would be a forum for Soviet criticisms of the Strategic Defense Initiative and continued US nuclear tests, as well as a forum for the advancement of the latest Soviet disarmament proposals.

While the Soviet Union lived up to these US expectations and fears, criticism of the West by the developing nations was muted and balanced with criticism of Soviet military spending and nuclear armament. In his statement at the conclusion of the conference Zimbabwe's ambassador, I.S.G. Mudenge, drew attention to the absence of the US and to its fears about the conference:

> No assessment of the outcome of this conference can be oblivious of the circumstances in which it was held. For in certain "no show" quarters there were dire predictions that the Conference would be no more than an occasion for mud-slinging between developing and developed countries - with the former importuning the latter for money and the latter, faces set in a mean mood, doing their best to hold on to their purses. This caricature has happily been proved to be unfounded.[47]

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[46] "US Will Boycott a UN Conference," New York Times, 22 August 1987, p.1.

[47] Letter from the Permanent Representative of Zimbabwe, A/Conf. 130/31, 11 September 1987, p.3.

Whether or not US fears were unfounded, and whether or not the United States' decision to boycott the Conference best served its foreign policy and economic interests, the fact that the US did not take part greatly undermined the usefulness of the conference and the significance of its Final Document.

The United Kingdom advanced the most confrontational line of any of the Western nations. The UK remained firm that there was no link between disarmament and development. The British ambassador told the Conference "my government is fully committed to disarmament and to development, each for its own sake....if savings do materialize from disarmament measures, we reserve the right to allocate these in accordance with our own priorities through channels we deem most appropriate...."[48] The British objected to frequent references to global military spending claiming that too much emphasis had been put on the fact that 6 percent of the global GNP goes to military spending. Britain noted "the other 94 percent of the world GNP is ignored...we believe this analysis to be fundamentally flawed."

In a direct attack on the Soviet Union, Britain also stressed the need for greater transparency (public knowledge) about national military spending. Joined by Australia, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, and West Germany, Britain attacked the Soviet position. These Western nations tabled figures comparing contributions to United Nations development and special relief programs. The figures showed that developing countries themselves contribute more to such efforts than the Eastern bloc. "The Soviet Union and countries of Eastern Europe provide only 1 percent of the voluntary contributions made by all countries (developing countries provide 12 percent)," said the Western group.

> In addition the United Nations spends more resources in Eastern European countries for procurement of equipment and sub-contractor services than it receives in contributions. For Western countries this net contribution is overwhelmingly positive.[49]

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[48] Letter from the Head of Delegation of the UK, A/Conf. 130/28, 11 September 1987, p.2.

[49] Letter, dated 28 August 1987 to the Secretary-General of the Conference, A/Conf. 130/18, 4 September 1987.

Mexico told the Conference on the second to last day that things were moving backward. Reviewing the history of attempts to link disarmament and development the Mexican ambassador told the Conference committee of the whole on September 4, "despite numerous UN studies, resolutions and convincing elements we have witnessed within and beyond this room efforts aimed at undervaluing and even undermining that relationship and thus this conference."[50] The ambassador accused other states of showing an allergy to the use of statistics (on military spending nationally and globally) and being allergic to the new international economic order.

Unlike Britain, the European Community did agree that emphasis on global military spending was important. "Emphasis is rightly put on the enormous volume of military spending needed to provide a degree of security...." However, in contrast to China and much of the Third World the Community expressed the view that, "military expenditure is not just the concern of the militarily most important countries or alliance members, but also of many countries facing economic and social problems that hamper their development."[51]

The Third World continues to see things in quite a different way: the rich, industrial states are not only responsible for most of the world's military spending they are also responsible for war, militarism and military spending in the poor countries. In this regard, the former head of state of Nigeria, General Obasanjo has said:

> It is now widely acknowledged that, in general, an interrelationship exists between disarmament and development. Any argument to the contrary which can only be based on selfish or unenlightened self-interest cannot be sustained.
>
> If the already heavily armed superpowers and their allies rationalize ever-increasing armaments in the name of security, rather than seek common security with their identified adversaries, how can one persuade weak and struggling nations of any other way to assure their own security?

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50 Statement by Ambassador Miguel Marin-Bosch, 4 September 1987, at the fifth meeting of the Committee of the Whole. Unofficial Translation from Delegation of Mexico, p.4.

51 Working Paper submitted by the Belgian delegation on behalf of the European Community, A/Conf. 130/PC/5, 16 April 1987, p.2.

> Attention to the rise of arms expenditures in developing countries should not distract from the fact that the responsibility for the arms race as a whole and the overwhelming portion of military expenditures are attributable to the major nuclear powers and their respective allies.[52]

Perhaps with Central America in mind, Cuba's ambassador to the UN, Oscar Orames, has asserted that,

> ...if we review figures, if we assess the amounts spent by developing countries in armaments, it will be possible to perceive clearly that the root-cause of those expenditures lies in the policies followed by certain states, policies clearly geared to involving the Third World in the arms race so as to ensure markets for their military products and promote the increase of tensions throughout the world.[53]

The Secretary-General of the South Commission, Manmohan Singh, blames the superpowers and other nations of the North for global armament, regional conflicts and neo-imperialism. Overlooking the fact that some Third World nations, such as India and Pakistan, have provoked their own wars, while others, such as India and China have developed and tested nuclear weapons, and still others have built up indigenous arms industries for export, he focuses on the behaviour of past and present industrialized powers.

> The global militarization process and superpower rivalries have no doubt been a major factor accentuating instability and armed conflicts in the Third World. Invariably, the countries of the North have been involved in these conflicts either directly or indirectly, or by supplying weapons and other support to the warring parties. Some of them played the key role in spreading the military culture, modern armaments and firepower to all corners of the globe. They also externalized world-wide radiation fall-out from their nuclear weapons tests, which was the first global environment problem that gained political recognition. There have also been many instances of the developed countries interfering actively in the internal affairs of the developing countries so as to draw them into their own sphere of interests.[54]

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[52] Speech to F. Ebert Conference, New York, 25 April 1988.

[53] Ibid., p.4.

[54] Ibid., p.5.

Such Third World views focus not so much on the economic and resource-use questions of armament and underdevelopment, but on the issue of military spending and armament (especially military spending and armament in and by the North) as an element of a nation's power and as a way to seek security.

Drawing on the UN studies some nations advocated a relationship between armament and underdevelopment on the basis of a mutual relationship to "'security." It was argued that both armament and underdevelopment have a negative impact on security. Some claimed that over-armament, especially superpower nuclear armament and high arms spending in areas of regional conflict and tension, made individual nations and the international community less secure. It was also argued that security was reduced when money, labour, scientific and research resources were consumed by armament, instead of being devoted to addressing non-military challenges to security such as poverty, social injustice and environmental decay.

However, there was sharp division among nations about the definition of security, and about the appropriateness and usefulness of linking disarmament-development to security. France claimed that security played "the key role"[55] in any relationship between disarmament and development. Cameroon complained that it was being "overemphasized."[56] Sweden praised the inclusion of a new definition of security while China warned that no country should "use security as an excuse to shirk its responsibility for disarmament."[57]

The Netherlands remained reluctant to the end to recognize any relationship between disarmament and development at all, with or without security as a bridge. "Disarmament and development are distinct processes which should be promoted indepen-

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55 Note Verbale from the Head of the French Delegation, A/Conf. 130/24, 11 September 1987, p.2.

56 Letter from the Permanent Representative of Cameroon, A/Conf. 130/37, 11 September 1987, p.3.

57 Note Verbale from the Delegation of China, A/Conf. 130/134, 11 September 1987, p.2.

dently on their own merits."[58] New Zealand claimed an "incontestable truth -- that excessive military expenditure can only jeopardize security -- including economic and social security."[59]

The United Kingdom maintained that security depended on armament and nuclear deterrence.

> The security policy pursued by a state will always be determined by how that state considers it best able to ensure its own safety. We fully agree that it is for each nation to determine the level of military expenditure it deems necessary for its own security. For 40 years our policy of defence and deterrence has provided that level of security, and my government remains committed to it.[60]

In contrast, the European Community said,

> One of the achievements of this conference is the reaffirmation of the crucial importance of the question of security in any detailed analysis of the relationship between disarmament and development....The twelve believe that a realistic approach reveals the connections between disarmament and development to turn on the third element in a triangular relationship-security.[61]

Zimbabwe expressed the views of the non-aligned states and denounced the conference emphasis on security. "References to security have been given extravagant and needless prominence in the final document." Disarmament and development should not be made "prisoners of security."[62]

Mexico was the harshest critic of all:

> Excessive importance is attached to security and to questions relating to security which are out of place in United Nations documents, and even inconsistent with the provisions of the Charter. The word "security" appears

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58 Letter from the Permanent Representative of the Netherlands, A/Conf. 130/33, 11 September 1987, p.2.

59 Letter from the Permanent Representative of New Zealand A/Conf. 130/36, 11 September 1987, p.3.

60 Letter from the Head of Delegation of the UK, A/Conf. 130/28, 11 September 1987, p.3.

61 Letter from the Permanent Representative of Denmark, A/Conf. 130/25, 11 September 1987, p.2.

62 Letter from the Permanent Representative of Zimbabwe, A/Conf. 130/31, 11 September 1987, p.2

> some 40 times in the text [of the conference draft Final Document], generally unqualified by "international," thus indicating a preference for the concept of security put forward by the major military alliances to the detriment of the system of collective security envisaged in the Charter. What is more, the implication is that any future discussion of the disarmament/development relationship should include security as a constant partner.[63]

Later, Mexico denounced the Conference for "giving far too much importance to the concept of security" and,

> ...developing countries must be more vigorous in defending our own position, so as to prevent others from diverting us from the course which we have been pursuing for years. We must therefore remain on the look-out against any attempt to forestall and perhaps even distort the essential objectives which have brought us together in this forum.[64]

It has been claimed[65] that the main result of the 1987 International Conference on the Relationship Between Disarmament and Development (ICRDD) was the consensus agreement among participating nations that security could be strengthened by both disarmament and development. Because disarmament could contribute to security, and because development could also contribute to security, disarmament and development can therefore be related through their common relationship to security.

The Conference attempt to define security therefore deserves some attention:

> Security consists of not only military, but also political, economic, social, humanitarian and human rights and ecological aspects....[66]
>
> ....Recently, non-military threats to security have moved to the forefront of global concern. Underdevelopment and declining prospects for development, as well as mismanagement and waste of resources, constitute challenges to security. The degradation of the environment presents a threat to sustainable development. The world can hardly be regarded as secure so long as there is

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63 Letter from the Permanent Representative of Mexico, A/Conf. 130/20, 9 September 1987, p.2.

64 Letter from the Deputy Permanent Representative of Mexico, A/Conf. 130/29, 11 September 1987, p.3.

65 For example, see the statement to the ICRDD by Douglas Roche, Canada's Ambassador for Disarmament, 11 September 1987, A/Conf. 130/135.

66 ICRDD Final Document, 11 September 1987, paragraph 14.

> polarization of wealth and poverty at the national and international levels. Gross and systematic violations of human rights retard genuine socio-economic development and create tensions which contribute to instability. Mass poverty, illiteracy, disease, squalor and malnutrition afflicting a large portion of the world's population often become the cause of social strain, tension and strife.[67]

Sweden, Canada and a few other nations saw this definition as a step forward. Nevertheless, the Conference definition of security refers to the inherent right of nations to seek security through armament, military spending and "self-defence."[68] It is this understanding of security that continues to be favoured by governments.

The conference conclusions, found in its Final Document, reflect the deeply divided nature of the debate and the inability of nations to agree on any kind of relationship between disarmament and development, any common understanding of the problems that face humanity or any useful initiatives or plans. The conference suggested that nations only "give further consideration to" a number of ideas including:

- reduced military spending

- use of military equipment and personnel for humanitarian, emergency and development needs

- greater openness about military budgets (with no specific proposals for an arms trade register, or military spending reporting system).

Nations also agreed to assess, study, review and analyze various military spending, disarmament and development issues. And they agreed to "strengthen the role of the UN" in disarmament and development including more UN based public information activities, cooperation, study and review.

The Final Document reflects the fact that there was no agreement on the question of the economic importance of armament, the economic relationship between armament and underdevelopment, or the political relationship between disarmament and development

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[67] Ibid., paragraph 18.

[68] Ibid., paragraph 15.

based on a common understanding of security. The debate was another example of the conflicting approaches of East and West, North and South, superpowers and the powerless, old powers and aspiring ones to armament, development and security. The conference offered no solutions to those conflicts.

The Conference concluded that disarmament and development could be related through security. Some nations, however, continued to claim that there was no relationship. Some felt that the inclusion of security was central to the debate and a major step foreword. Others saw this inclusion as excessive or out of place. Still others saw the inclusion of security in the relationship as a diversion, distortion and an attack on the UN Charter.

The absence of the United States, the world's largest military spender, largest economy and largest (in dollar terms) development assistance contributor undermines the claim that an international consensus has been reached on the link between disarmament and development. The absence of the United States from the debate and from participation in the drafting of the Final Document of the conference also undermines the real significance and value of that final statement.

CANADA: HELPFUL FIXER?

Canada's approach to the conference, according to Peggy Mason, then a senior aide to External Affairs minister Joe Clark, was damage control.

> We used our credibility to try to be realistic and find consensus among hard line West and Non-aligned positions. The conference could have resulted in no agreement. That would have removed the disarmament-development relationship from the international agenda and could have further divided the international community. The conference kept the concept alive and kept it on the international agenda. In that sense we see New York as a success.[69]

Former Disarmament Ambassador Douglas Roche was more enthusiastic. He saw the conference as a success and believes that Canada played a useful, helpful role in reaching a consensus on a relationship between disarmament, development and security. Ambassador Roche re-iterated that disarmament and development "are the two pillars

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[69] From an interview, April 1988, Ottawa.

upon which an enduring peace can be built." He said, however, that "the problem is security. Whether we like it or not, nations have not reached the state of altruism where they will disarm for the sake of development. They arm because they feel their security to be threatened. Only when the threat to security is lessened is real disarmament possible." He noted that, paradoxically, "the inflated arms race itself becomes a threat to security" and that "underdevelopment is itself a growing non-military threat to security."[70]

Canada's non-governmental organizations are less enthusiastic about the outcome of the conference and are critical of Canada's role and objectives. Groups such as Project Ploughshares (the coalition of churches in disarmament work), the Group of 78, the Canadian Council for International Cooperation and Canadian World Federalists had an opportunity for participation and some direct influence on Canada's position and even the conference Final Document. As the UN Association of Canada put it:

> Canadian NGOs were kept abreast of conference developments by Mr. Douglas Roche, Canada's Ambassador for Disarmament, who met twice weekly with them in the Canadian Mission to the UN. At these meetings, the ambassador, assisted by officials of the Canadian delegation, not merely briefed the NGOs on the changing views and diplomatic alignments at the conference but entered into discussions with them regarding the significance of the conference for Canada and for the international community. It must also be recorded that the only specific reference to non-governmental organizations which is to be found in item 8 of the Final Document came as a direct result of Canadian intervention with the other delegations.[71]

But the NGOs were not happy. In general they felt that the conference failed to address a number of vital issues and that the consensus process produced a Final Document that is weak.

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[70] Douglas Roche, "UN Designs Two Pillars to Shore Up World Security," Globe and Mail, 15 September 1987, p.A7.

[71] The International Conference on the Relationship Between Disarmament and Development, UN Association of Canada Briefing Paper, Edward R. Appathurai, March 1988, p.2.

Writing in Disarmament Times, Pieter van Rossem notes that "two factors involved in the relationship between disarmament and development ended up virtually ignored in the Final Document: arms trade and conversion."[72] Simon Rosenblum of Project Ploughshares criticized the conference for failing to analyze Third World development, failing to break new ground "regarding the issues pertaining to military threats to security," and in reference to the Final Document said, "The hungry of this planet will not sleep easily on such hollow promises."[73]

The NGOs were unhappy that some Western nations were intent on blocking any steps toward the creation of an international fund for the transfer of disarmament savings to development. Because the conference work was based on the need for consensus for a final document, with Canada strongly promoting the consensus approach, these Western nations had an effective veto over such steps.

Like Mexico, the NGOs were dismayed at the progressive weakening of the Final Document through its various drafts. The NGOs even proposed their own amendments to the Final Document in order to revive references to a fund, an arms trade and military budgets international register, progress in conversion of the arms industry to civilian activities, the role of international law, non-provocative defence and general, rather than national, security.

The Canadian NGOs had some special criticisms of the Canadian government's approach to the conference. Canada, they claim, took "the lowest common denominator" approach in efforts to reach consensus and therefore failed to promote the armament-underdevelopment relationship and the concrete measures that should be taken to advance disarmament and development. Sweden had completed a major two-volume study on the conversion of the arms industry to civilian production. Canada had done nothing. Canada, potentially in a good position to do so, did nothing to advocate control of the interna-

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72 Pieter van Rossem, "Invisible Issues at ICRDD: Arms Trade and Conversion," Disarmament Times, 18 September 1987, Vol. X, No.5., p.2.

73 Simon Rosenblum, "Disarmament and Development at the United Nations," Ploughshares Monitor, December 1987, Vol. VIII, No.4., p.20.

tional arms trade. The NGOs also detected an anti-Soviet bias from the Department of External Affairs.

They were also distressed at Canada's attempt to amend the Final Document. Canada advocated adding "private investment" to the document's references to development. And Canada insisted that a "comprehensive data base on global and national military expenditures is an essential precondition for the study and analysis of the impact of military expenditure on the world economy and international economic system."[74] This, many felt, would simply delay any such study and analysis and forever postpone strengthening the case for economic links between armament and underdevelopment.

The NGOs were pleased with the Final Document's broader definition of security, the preservation of the disarmament-development debate on the UN agenda, and as a kind of bonus, a stronger bonding between Canadian disarmament, development and environment non-governmental organizations.

Finally, like many Canadians, the NGOs were alarmed by the contradiction between, on the one hand, Canada's position at the conference in favour of reduced military spending and, on the other, the 1987 Defence White Paper with its plans for increased military spending, and the procurement of major new weapons such as nuclear-powered attack-submarines and battlefield tanks for Europe.

In the opening address to the Conference on 24 August 1987 External Affairs Minister Joe Clark said:

> Canada assumes all participants share the principle that less money must be spent on arms, and more money must be spent on development.
>
> The control and reduction of armaments--both conventional and nuclear weapons--constitute a major Canadian foreign policy objective.
>
> ...global levels of conventional arms are high and rising, and that is a problem which many member states could help resolve by their own action....
>
> The armaments industry and trade in arms absorb vast quantities of resources, which could be better devoted to civilian use....

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74 Amendments, Working Group III, A/Conf. 130/WGIII/CRP.1, 28 August 1987.

> The security of everyone will be strengthened by both disarmament and development.[75]

Clark clearly expressed an understanding of security that not only recognized non-military threats (hunger, poverty, inequality) but also sees armament itself as a threat to everyone's security. Canada, he claimed wants nuclear and conventional arms reductions and looks to all nations to take such actions.

This view of security was not shared by then Defence Minister Perrin Beatty. Two months before Clark's speech in New York, Beatty told Canadians that the way to understand security and the best way to preserve it is military strength. The government's 1987 White Paper on Defence said, "...the West has no choice but to rely for its security on the maintenance of a rough balance of forces, backed up by nuclear deterrence..." to prevent Western Europe from being "subverted, overrun or destroyed."[76]

Two weeks after Canada signed the international Conference Final Document, agreeing that "non-military threats to security have moved to the forefront of global concern",[77] the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National defence, Bud Bradley, MP, told the House of Commons that the Defence White Paper is "visionary" policy and that,

> the reality is that each nation will judge its own security in its own terms.
>
> The notion, therefore, that Canadian defence expenditures should be reduced for the purpose of transferring funds for developing in the Third World ignores the fact that the level of such expenditures is decided in accordance with overall security considerations.[78]

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75 Statement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, New York, 24 August 1987, Press Release No. 17, Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations.

76 Challenge and Commitment, A Defence Policy for Canada, Department of National Defence, June 1987, pp.5-6.

77 ICRDD Final Document, para 18.

78 House of Commons Debates, 25 September 1987.

CONCLUSION

Disarmament could contribute to security, so could development. However, nations cannot agree on a common understanding of security. Lack of such an understanding and agreement, as expressed at the 1987 international conference, and even within the Canadian Cabinet and government, is unlikely to change in the short term. Like beauty, security is in the eye of the beholder.

Nevertheless, the promotion of an understanding of security that includes non-military elements such as economic well-being, environment protection, sustainable development, social justice and the strengthening of human rights is useful. A broader understanding of security will help change and shape the spending decisions of governments and the conduct of international affairs. The international conference was an important step in that evolution. The Final Document is a milestone response to the call of the Brandt Commission,[79] and others for efforts to enlarge and popularize a broader understanding of security.

Governments must now do more. There is a need for new politics in West and East, North and South. Governments must be convinced that national security, domestic power and international influence can be maintained through disarmament, rather than armament, and through change, rather than maintenance of the present military and economic status quo. Prime Minister Michael Manley of Jamaica has put it simply: "Survival requires change."[80]

Such change must include new forms of international political cooperation and organization. This need is increasingly being recognized in Eastern Europe:

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79 North-South: a Programme for Survival, Independent Commission on International Development Issues, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1980, p.284.

80 Global Challenge, report of the Socialist International Committee on Economic Policy, p.199.

> We are now on the verge of some of the greatest events in human history. In the third of the world which communism has ruled, it is now practically dead. And that third of the world must find a new way--how, nobody can say. We need new politics.[81]

There are increasing calls for political change to deal with the development and environment challenges. Some, like James G. Speth of the World Resources Institute, have called for a political and economic "bargain" to be struck between North and South. Access to substantially increased capital flows and development assistance from the North can be linked to Third World progress in meeting environmental and population challenges.[82] Others, like Canadian Jim MacNeill, Secretary General to the Brundtland Commission from 1984-1987, say reform of institutions is essential.

> Many of our problems stem from the way we have traditionally organized our institutions....The most urgent task is to make our central economic, trade and sectoral agencies directly responsible and accountable for ensuring that their policies -- and the budgets they command -- encourage development that is sustainable.[83]

As well as new institutions, some argue that new thinking is required. William S. Fyfe, a Canadian geologist, says concern about the environment now requires that "the great gaps between the social and the natural sciences close a little."[84] Other scientists have called for "something like a revolutionary reorientation of the mind of some social

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[81] Milovan Djilas, "Yugoslavia's Dissident Communist Philosopher, Politics Has to Keep up with the Economy," International Herald Tribune, 3 July 1989, p.4 (from The Washington Post).

[82] "For North-South Cooperation to Save the Environment," Herald Tribune, 12 July 1989, p.4 (from The Washington Post).

[83] Jim MacNeill, "Environment and Development," International Perspectives 17 (3) May/June 1988, p.6.

[84] Global Change: What Should Canada Do?, W. S. Fyfe, paper to Academy III, University of Montreal, 5 June 1983. Royal Society of Canada Series IV, vol. XXIII, 1985.

scientists and humanists"[85] in order to seek solutions to global problems in a broad, interdisciplinary way. There is an urgent need, Canada's natural scientists argue, to furnish "principles of social architecture for the design of national and supernational institutions to deal with global change."[86]

Efforts to link disarmament and development and international debate about the existence and nature of such a link provide an important precedent in what must now become a more urgent, more successful effort to address the great interrelated challenges to human survival and progress. It is clear that the only solutions to war, poverty, injustice and environmental decay will be integrated global solutions.

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85 Human Dimensions of Global Change: The Challenge to the Humanities and the Social Sciences. Braybrooke and Paquet, p.282, Royal Society of Canada, Series V. vol. II, 1987.

86 Ibid.